

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A fuel cell cathode comprising a catalyst layer that comprises a catalyst-supporting electrically conductive carrier and a polymer electrolyte, wherein a catalyst is additionally supported by or mixed with said catalyst-supporting electrically conductive carrier, said catalyst being in contact with an oxygen absorbing/releasing material.

2. (Original) The fuel cell cathode according to claim 1, wherein said oxygen absorbing/releasing material is comprised of one or more of an oxidation-number-variable metal, a metal oxide, or a compound thereof, which absorbs or releases oxygen based on the change in oxidation number.

3. (Original) The fuel cell cathode according to claim 1, wherein said oxygen absorbing/releasing material is comprised of one or more of Zr, Y, an alkali metal, an oxide of alkaline earth metal, or a compound thereof, which absorbs or releases oxygen based on the adsorption of oxygen.

4. (Original) The fuel cell cathode according to claim 3, wherein said oxygen absorbing/releasing material is comprised of one or more of  $\text{CeO}_2$ ,  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2$ ,  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2\text{-Y}_2\text{O}_3$ , or  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2\text{-rare-earth oxide}$ .

5. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 4,~~ claim 1, wherein the amount of said oxygen absorbing/releasing material in said catalyst layer is 5 to 16 wt.% relative to the total amount.

6. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 5,~~ claim 1, wherein the total amount of the catalyst supported by said catalyst layer is 30 wt.% or less thereof.

7. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 6,~~ claim 1, wherein the average particle size of said oxygen absorbing/releasing material is 2 to 40 nm.

8. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 4 to 7,~~ claim 4, wherein said oxygen absorbing/releasing material is comprised of one or more of  $\text{CeO}_2$ ,  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2$ ,  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2\text{-Y}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2\text{-rare-earth oxide}$ , of which  $\text{CeO}_2$  has been partly reduced to  $\text{Ce}_2\text{O}_3$ .

9. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 8,~~ claim 1, wherein the ratio of the amount of said polymer electrolyte to the amount of said carrier in said catalyst layer is 0.8 to 1 or less.

10. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 9,~~ claim 1, wherein said carrier is comprised of carbon that has been treated to be hydrophobic.

11. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 10,~~ claim 1, wherein the pore volume of said catalyst layer is increased by treating a catalyst ink, of which said catalyst layer is made, such that the number of pores therein is increased.

12. (Currently Amended) The fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 11,~~ claim 1, wherein more of said oxygen absorbing/releasing material is contained towards the electrolyte membrane side in said catalyst layer than towards the diffusion layer side, and wherein less of said oxygen absorbing/releasing material is contained towards the diffusion layer side than towards the electrolyte membrane side, or none at all is contained in such location.

13. (Currently Amended) A polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising an anode, a cathode, and a polymer electrolyte membrane disposed between said anode and said cathode, said cathode comprising the fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1.

14. (Currently Amended) A method of operating a polymer electrolyte fuel cell comprising an anode, a cathode, and a polymer electrolyte membrane disposed between said anode and said cathode, wherein said cathode comprises the fuel cell cathode according to ~~any one of claims 4 to 12~~, claim 4, said method comprising feeding hydrogen gas to said oxygen absorbing/releasing material, which is comprised of one or more of  $\text{CeO}_2$ ,  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2$ ,  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2\text{-Y}_2\text{O}_3$ , or  $\text{CeO}_2\text{-ZrO}_2\text{-rare-earth oxide}$ , periodically in a pulsed manner before or during operation so as to treat  $\text{CeO}_2$  to be partly reduced to  $\text{CeO}_3$ .